

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5483

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAHINGEN

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 9941

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG SU MARR

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN-SUDANESE JOINT DEFENSE AGREEMENT

REF: CAIRO 9785

SUMMARY. PRESS REPORTS 25 YEAR JOINT DEFENSE AGREEMENT
DEFINES ATTACK ON ONE COUNTRY AS ATTACK ON BOTH. JOINT
DEFENSE COUNCIL AND GENERAL STAFF WILL COORDINATE
ACTIVITY. EGYPT HAS SOME CAPABILITY TO ADD TO NUMAYRI'S
DEFENSES AND LIKELY TO INCREASE NUMBER OF ADVISORS POSTED
IN SUDAN. BEYOND STRATEGIC DEPTH, HOWEVER, SUDAN UNABLE
FURNISH EGYPTIANS MORE THAN TOKEN HELP. SAUDIS PRESUMABLY
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SUPPORT ARRANGEMENT AS MEANS TO INSURE PRESENCE OF FRIENDLY

REGIME ON WESTERN SHORE OF RED SEA. EGYPTIAN POLITICAL OBJECTIVE IN ENTERING INTO AGREEMENT IS TO PREVENT RISE OF PRO-QADHAFI REGIME IN SUDAN AND EGYPTIANS WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY MOVE TO SAVE NUMAYRI AND PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM SUCH AN EVENTUALITY. END SUMMARY.

1. JULY 22 PRESS REPORTS ELABORATE ON 25 YEAR JOINT DEFENSE AGREEMENT CONCLUDED BETWEEN EGYPT AND SUDAN LAST WEEK (REFTEL). ACCORDING TO PRESS, HEART OF EIGHT ARTICLE AGREEMENT IS DEFINITION OF ATTACK ON ONE COUNTRY AS ATTACK ON BOTH. IN THIS CASE, PAPERS SAY, SIGNATORIES WILL REACT IMMEDIATELY WITH ALL NECESSARY MEASURES.

2. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE AGREEMENT REPORTEDLY IS TO BE GUARANTEED BY COORDINATION THROUGH A JOINT DEFENSE COUNCIL AND JOINT GENERAL STAFF. FOREIGN AND WAR MINISTERS OF TWO SIDES WILL SIT ON COUNCIL, WHICH CHARGED WITH A) WORKING OUT GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR COOPERATION IN ALL FIELDS AS DETERMINED TO ANY ATTACK ON EITHER SIDE; B) MAKING NECESSARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COORDINATION ACTIVITIES OF TWO COUNTRIES FOR JOINT WAR EFFORT; C) APPROVING DECISIONS BY JOINT STAFF AND D) HOLDING MEETINGS IN CAIRO AND KHARTOUM SEMI-ANNUALLY OR AS NECESSARY.

3. JOINT STAFF WILL CONSIST OF CHIEFS OF STAFF OF ARMED FORCES AND EQUAL NUMBERS OF OFFICERS FROM BOTH COUNTRIES. STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPING PLANS TO IMPROVE COMBAT CAPABILITIES OF ARMED FORCES. IT SCHEDULED TO MEET EVERY THREE MONTHS OR AS NECESSARY AT REQUEST OF CHIEFS OF STAFF OF EITHER COUNTRY.

4. COMMENT: NEW DEFENSE AGREEMENT RAISES QUESTION OF EGYPTIAN MILITARY CAPABILITY EFFECTIVELY TO PROTECT NUMAYRI. OUR ESTIMATE IS THAT EGYPT COULD ON SHORT NOTICE PROVIDE MILITARY FORCES, POSSIBLY AS MUCH AS FOUR BRIGADES (APPROXIMATELY 15,000 MEN), WHICH COULD BE AIRLIFTED TO SUDAN IN 24 HOURS UTILIZING EXISTING EGYPTIAN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT.

5. IN PAST, EGYPT HAS STATIONED BOMBER AIRCRAFT IN KHARTOUM AS SANCTUARY FROM ISRAELI AIR ATTACKS. GOE COULD ALSO AGAIN ELECT TO USE SUDAN FOR A SIMILAR SELF-INTERESTED PURPOSE, I.E., TO PROVIDE STRATEGIC DEPTH FOR EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES. SUCH FORCES WOULD AT SAME TIME BE IN PLACE TO HELP NUMAYRI. HOWEVER, WE CONFIDENTIAL

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HAVE NO EVIDENCE GOE HAS MADE ANY DECISION TO DO SO. EGYPTIANS CURRENTLY STATION SOME 300 AIR FORCE AND ARMY ADVISORS IN SUDAN. IN VIEW NEW DEFENSE AGREEMENT, THESE ADVISORS WILL PROBABLY BE AUGMENTED AND MOST LIKELY WOULD BECOME THE EGYPTIAN ADVANCE PARTY IN THE EVENT THAT THE EGYPTIANS ARE REQUESTED TO MOVE MILITARY FORCES TO SUDAN IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT.

6. CONCERNING MILITARY EQUIPMENT INTEGRATION, MUCH OF THE EQUIP-

MENT IS SIMILAR, I.E., SOVIET, AND THEREFORE SUDANESE TROOPS COULD BE SUPPLIED WITH EGYPTIAN EQUIPMENT SUCH AS TANKS, APCs, FIELD ARTILLERY, AND AIRCRAFT WITHOUT DELAY. EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE IS FLYING RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS IN UWAYNAT TRIANGLE AREA IN SEARCH OF INFILTRATORS FROM LIBYA.

7. OTHER SIDE OF COIN IS WHAT SUDAN CAN DO TO BOLSTER EGYPTIAN MILITARY STRENGTH. SUDAN, WITH 50,000-MAN ARMY, ORGANIZED INTO 12 BRIGADES, CAN ONLY PROVIDE A TOKEN MILITARY FORCE AS A PUBLIC GESTURE OF MORAL SUPPORT AND GOOD FAITH IN DEMONSTRATION OF SUDANESE INTENT TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENT. SUDAN HAS, IN SUPPORT OF EGYPT, MAINTAINED ELEMENTS OF ONE BRIGADE IN EGYPT, WHICH WAS AIRLIFTED BACK TO SUDAN SHORTLY AFTER THE ABORTIVE COUP ATTEMPT. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT A SMALL, REPRESENTATIONAL GROUP OF MILITARY PERSONNEL (ONE OR TWO COMPANIES) WILL BE RETURNED TO EGYPT WHEN PUBLIC ORDER AND CONFIDENCE ARE RESTORED IN SUDAN. IN THE EVENT OF AN OUTBREAK OF ARAB-ISRAELI HOSTILITIES, SUDAN CANNOT PROVIDE EGYPT WITH ANY SIGNIFICANT MILITARY ASSISTANCE WHICH WOULD BE CAPABLE OF INFLUENCING THE OUTCOME.

8. FROM POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW, AGREEMENT WAS REVIEWED DURING TRIPARTITE JIDDA SUMMIT AND PRESUMABLY ENJOYS MORAL SUPPORT OF SAUDIS, WHO SHARE DESIRE TO KEEP WESTERN SHORE OF RED SEA IN HANDS OF MODERATE AND FRIENDLY REGIMES TO EXTENT POSSIBLE. WE UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT SAUDIS REFUSED SIGN AGREEMENT. DIRECT MANNER WITH WHICH AGREEMENT WAS PRESENTED TO PUBLIC SUGGESTS STRONG DEGREE OF EGYPTIAN COMMITMENT TO GENERAL CLOSING OF RANKS WITH SUDAN. EGYPTIANS ARE GENERALLY WORRIED ABOUT SUDANESE STABILITY AND THEIR STRONG PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO STAND BY THE SUDAN IS CLEARLY ALSO INTENDED AS A DETERRENT TO LIBYAN AND OTHER ADVENTURISM.

9. WHILE EGYPTIAN MILITARY PLANNERS ARE TAKING NEW ARRANGEMENT SERIOUSLY, BASIC IMPORTANCE OF AGREEMENT SEEMS TO US CONFIDENTIAL

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POLITICAL. IT INTENDED FIRST AND FOREMOST AS A POLITICAL DETERRENT WITH TEETH, AIMED PRIMARILY AT LIBYA. ANY DECISION TO SEND EGYPTIAN TROOPS WILL BE MADE ON POLITICAL GROUNDS BY SADAT PERSONALLY. IT IS JUST CONCEIVABLE THAT IN CASE OF A QUICK, SUCCESSFUL OUSTER OF NUMAYRI BY INTERNAL SUDANESE ELEMENTS WHOM EGYPT JUDGES TO BE ACCEPTABLE NEIGHBORS, SADAT MIGHT CHOOSE NOT HONOR HIS MILITARY COMMITMENT. GOE, HOWEVER, AT THIS JUNCTURE BELIEVES ANY NEW "RISING" WOULD INVOLVE LIBYANS; EGYPTIANS WILL NOT ACCEPT QADHAFI DOMINATED REGIMES TO BOTH WEST AND SOUTH, AND WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY

INTERVENE TO SAVE NUMAYRI AND THEMSELVES FROM SUCH AN EVENTUALITY. EILTS

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